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SUBJECT: CHAD: LOGISTICS CHALLENGES AS RAINY SEASON LOOMS, AND PORT
COMPETITION WITH EUFOR/MINURCAT INCREASES

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Summary

¶1. Regional Food for Peace Officer (RFFPO) Dan Suther visited Chad 9-18 April to assess WFP's logistical operation for eastern Chad. WFP/Chad has a difficult task ahead providing seven months of food for over 400,000 refugees and IDPs before the end of June: distributing May-June rations as well as pre-positioning sufficient commodities for July-November before the late June rains cut off access to the eastern camps. While WFP has or will have sufficient quantities of food in stock, it will also be difficult to transport these commodities expeditiously through the Cameroonian and Libyan corridors due to a number of constraining factors.

¶2. We recommend that FFP/W continue to raise the issue of prioritization of WFP humanitarian food assistance over EUFOR/MINURCAT equipment during this critical period; that FFP/W request WFP/Rome to continue providing strong temporary logistical support to WFP/Chad; and that the USG support WFP's Faya logistics hub Special Operation (SO). We also have several medium-term recommendations to help support WFP operations after the rainy season. End summary.

WFP/Chad Pre-Positioning Plan and Constraints

¶3. WFP/Chad has a huge job ahead of it getting seven months of food into the camps for distributions May-June and pre-positioning for July-November. The total needs for these seven months are around 50,000 MT. WFP recognizes however that it will not be able to meet the full requirements for May-June, and is planning to distribute 80% cereal rations (100% of other commodities) for these two months to both the refugees and IDPs. Based on currently good nutritional data, WFP believes that this reduction will likely not have a seriously detrimental effect on the food security situation in the east.

¶4. Based on this planned reduction then, WFP needs to deliver a total of around 45,000 MT by the end of June, before the July-October rains render many areas of the east inaccessible. WFP has or will have in the next few weeks around 57,000 MT available on the continent, more than enough to meet these needs. However, the key will be to move these quantities in time from Cameroon and Libya

into Chad - at which point WFP believes that once it can finally "touch" the commodities, it can control the transport to the extended delivery points (EDPs) much more quickly and effectively.

-- Douala --

¶15. Our greatest concern is around 20,000 MT in the Douala corridor. WFP has 15,080 MT of FFP commodities arriving 15 April. Under good conditions with an open corridor, WFP believes it could move around 4,000-5,000 MT/month through this corridor - which would likely already not be sufficient to move the entire amount in time, possibly 15,000 MT over the next ten weeks.

¶16. Compounding this is the fact that EUFOR and MINURCAT have at least five vessels due in Douala the same week as the FFP ship, and will be competing with WFP at the port, in transport to N'Djamena, and for onward transport to the east. The full impact of this competition is as yet unknown, but we can roughly estimate that WFP's planned transport capacity might be halved. Therefore, WFP could only be able to move less than 10,000 MT of these commodities to the EDPs in time.

¶17. WFP has had some coordination discussions with these organizations at the technical and representational levels in N'Djamena, but the groups are under orders from their headquarters to move cargo east before the rains, as of course is WFP.

-- Khufra --

¶18. In addition, WFP has around 18,000 MT in Khufra, Libya and in transit between there and eastern Chad. WFP plans for these commodities to meet the requirements of all the camps for May and June. The fuel issues with the Libyan authorities have now been temporarily resolved until around October. WFP's current agreement is that it pays approximately \$1.00 per liter of diesel (international market price), and is refunded 25% of this by the

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Libyan government (as a credited donor contribution to the EMOP). However, WFP still then pays around \$0.62/liter more than the national (subsidized) price of \$0.12/liter which everyone else pays at the pump. WFP estimates that it is overpaying around \$4.6 million/year - effectively as a "humanitarian tax" to the government.

¶19. The capacity of this corridor is currently around 5,000 MT/month, which WFP expects to be augmented to 7,000 MT/month with the initiation of the Faya logistical hub. There is some concern about this corridor backing up when the Benghazi commodities (below) arrive in Khufra; however, by that time, the Faya operation should be well in place, and we do not see this as a critical limiting factor in the pre-positioning operation.

-- Benghazi --

¶10. Finally, a vessel carrying 18,570 MT of FFP sorghum is due in Benghazi o/a 7 May. By this time, the Faya hub should be up and running. WFP plans to use these commodities to pre-position central camps, then move northward, where some full access to camps will remain throughout the rainy season. WFP expects that using Libyan trucks up to Faya, with transshipment on Chadian desert trucks to the EDPs, will reduce Khufra-EDP-Khufra turnaround time to just 32 days from around 60 days at present. The main delays in using the Libyan transporters to the EDPs have been due to the drivers' priorities in taking time to sell fuel and buy livestock, as well as the inevitable formal and informal Chadian checkpoints and controls that delay such large international convoys.

-- Faya --

¶11. RFFPO and DCHA Chad Field Officer visited Faya on 14 April, together with ECHO Representative and WFP staff. WFP has identified a suitable area for food warehousing and truck transfer, as well as office/accommodation space, and the local Chadian authorities and French military contingent are providing strong support for the operation. WFP plans to fly in storage tents, office and

accommodation prefabs, ICT equipment and vehicles from Dubai and Brindisi, and to have the hub operational by the first week of May until sometime around July or August, when all the commodities from Libya should have reached the EDPs.

¶12. WFP has also identified an experienced logistician, who in fact operationalized the original Libya-Chad convoys, to head the office beginning in May. WFP has tendered for Chadian transport from Faya to the EDPs, and expects to have 120-140 trucks available. In short, WFP appeared to have the details in order, and satisfied our technical concerns about the operation.

¶13. WFP plans to initially target all refugee and IDP camps for May/June distributions with the commodities already on the move from Khufra. Following this, the Khufra and Douala commodities will then be used to pre-position the southern camps (Goz Beida area), moving steadily north through the central camps (Farchana area). The Benghazi commodities would then be used to serve the northern camps from July-November, as a number of these northern areas can be reached throughout the rainy season. WFP's plan will remain flexible in order to maximize its transport capacity at every level.

Potential Helpful Measures

¶14. EUFOR/MINURCAT coordination and prioritization: There certainly needs to be better technical and representational coordination at the N'Djamena level between WFP and EUFOR/MINURCAT. That said, even the best local-level coordination would only have alerted WFP earlier to the current Douala problem that would still have materialized. Ambassador Nigro has raised this matter with EUFOR leadership. To be even more effective, there needs to be complementary headquarters discussions on the actual prioritization of humanitarian assistance over other cargo.

¶15. At this point, it is too late to stop the EUFOR/MINURCAT ships. However, if some cargo could be held in Douala or airlifted out, allowing WFP to more fully utilize the road/rail corridor to eastern Chad for this period, this would be of enormous assistance. Otherwise, the possibility exists that WFP may fail to get sufficient commodities through this corridor in time, and that an expensive food airlift capacity may be required down the line - and

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of course a number of the same donors would then be asked to foot this bill.

¶16. USG Support for the Faya Special Operation: We believe that the Faya logistical hub will likely allow WFP to move (mainly FFP) commodities much more quickly and effectively through the Libya corridor to eastern Chad. ECHO plans a likely EURO 1.5 million contribution toward setting this up, which could also be used to help cover the additional transport costs incurred by adding the Chadian transporters. As the commodities in Libya have been provided by FFP, it would also be helpful for the USG to contribute to WFP's SO.

¶17. WFP Staffing: Despite the intense logistics of the Chad operation, WFP currently has no deputy logistics officer position. WFP/Rome has seconded a staff member for the past two months to serve in this capacity, which has been extremely helpful. However, she was asked to return to Rome despite WFP/Chad's pleas for her to remain through May. While WFP has identified a strong international staff member for Faya, it has no Abeche logistician (there is an unfilled slot), nor effective overall leadership in the east. It would be extremely helpful for WFP to maintain the strong logistical TDY support from Rome at least through May, and to expeditiously fill its logistics officer and emergency program officer positions in Abeche with suitable professionals.

¶18. Libya fuel issue: We do not believe that there is any need right now for the USG to engage the Libyan government on the WFP fuel issue, as things have been resolved for the time being (if not in a particularly advantageous manner), and we do not want to potentially hold up the current 18,000 MT or the incoming 18,750 MT. However, we

believe that sometime around July/August, before the current agreement expires, the USG should push this issue heavily on WFP's behalf. WFP, especially as a humanitarian organization, should not be the only agency in Libya paying millions of dollars of fuel tax to the government (with FFP funds). This ends up making the Libya corridor far less cost-effective (it used to be actually cheaper than Douala, but no more), and WFP would need to re-evaluate the whole Libya operation if these additional costs were to continue.

¶19. Plan for next year: As we do not expect humanitarian needs in eastern Chad to reduce significantly by next year, FFP needs to begin engaging jointly with WFP and other donors in order to plan well-spaced contributions effectively, and to prepare well for next year's rainy season.

Conclusion/Recommendations

¶20. WFP is currently dealing rather well with its ongoing logistical issues. Delayed FFP commodities, the N'Djamena coup attempt, and the current Douala-to-eastern Chad competition could not really have been completely foreseen and taken into account. WFP has a good, flexible logistics plan in place. However, there do remain significant concerns, primarily about the Douala corridor.

¶21. Depending on the impact of the Douala transport competition with EUFOR/MINURCAT, we believe that WFP may be forced to cut cereal distributions during the rainy season by 20% or possibly more to some of the southern camps. While it is rather too late now to do much to remedy the immediate situation, we do recommend the following immediate and medium-term interventions:

a. As we understand that some prioritization discussions have now taken place in Washington, we recommend that FFP/W and others continue these discussions at the headquarters levels on prioritization of WFP humanitarian assistance over EUFOR/MINURCAT cargo through the Douala corridor.

b. DCHA Field Officer and RFFPO recommend appropriate USG support for WFP's Faya SO.

c. FFP/W should immediately request that Rome continue to support the WFP/Chad logistics operation with strong TDY staff until at least the end of May, and that WFP expeditiously fill the Logistics Officer and Emergency Program Officer positions in Abeche.

d. We recommend that, around July, the USG begin to advocate for WFP with the Libyan government in order to put a stop to the "humanitarian tax" on fuel.

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e. Later in the year, FFP should begin engagement jointly with WFP and other donors in order to plan well-spaced contributions effectively and prepare well for next year's rainy season. NIGRO